

Bigfoot Density Management

South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management Environmental Assessment (EA # OR-105-00-03) South River Field Office, Roseburg District

Prepared: August 22, 2003

Decision Documentation

Decision:

It is my decision to offer the Bigfoot Density Management sale, completing the implementation of Alternative 1 of the South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management analysis, as described on pp. 3-5 of the EA.

The sale will consist of one unit in T. 30 S., R. 2 W., Section 17, W.M., totaling 81 acres. The unit was identified as Unit J in the South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management EA. Approximately 68 acres are allocated as Connectivity/Diversity Block and 13 acres as Riparian Reserves. Two acres of right-of-way will be cut within the unit and an additional one acre will be cut outside of the unit in association with improvement of Road No. 30-2-20.1.

Density management within the Connectivity/Diversity Block land allocation will contribute approximately 1,194 MBF of timber, equivalent to 2287 CCF, toward the annual allowable sale quantity (ASQ) for the Roseburg District. Density management in the Riparian Reserves will yield approximately 216 MBF of timber, equivalent to 419 CCF, which is not chargeable toward the ASQ. It is anticipated that additional volume will be modified into the sale for tail, guyline, and corridor trees.

Access will be provided by a combination of existing roads and temporary spur roads. Two temporary spur roads will be newly constructed, while two others will be provided by renovation of natural-surface roads from a previous harvest entry. All the temporary roads will be used and decommissioned in the same operating season in which they are constructed or renovated. Improvements, including realignment and surfacing, will be made to approximately 0.66 miles of Road No. 30-2-20.1, from the south boundary of Section 17 into the unit. At the completion of density management, the road will be blocked at the end of the surfaced portion.

A combination of cable yarding and ground-based harvest systems will be utilized. Ground-based operations and cable yarding operations utilizing temporary roads will be restricted to the dry season, between May 15th and October 1st.

All road construction and yarding equipment will be pressure washed or steam cleaned prior to being moved into the project area. The purpose of washing the equipment is to remove any vegetative material or soil that may be contaminated with weed seeds. This is intended to minimize, if not eliminate, the risk of transporting new weed species into the project area.

Surveys were conducted for those Special Status and Survey and Manage botanical species identified in the South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management EA (p. 17). Eight *Buxbaumia viridis* sites and one *Spathularia flavida* site were located. *Buxbaumia viridis* was removed from the Survey and Manage Species list in all areas of the Northwest Forest Plan, except for northern California, following completion of the 2001 Species Review. Protection of the sites is not required. The *Spathularia flavida* site will be protected by a 100-foot radius buffer to prevent disturbance or modification of habitat conditions.

Strategic surveys for the red tree vole identified a single active nest in the density management unit. Subsequent surveys, outside of the unit boundaries, along the proposed route for realignment of BLM Road No. 30-2-20.1 identified evidence of two additional nests, although they were not located. Following procedure and direction set forth in the Standards and Guidelines (p. 10) of the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* and BLM Information Bulletin No. OR-2001-273, *Survey and Manage Species - Identification of Non-high Priority Sites*, the South River Field Office determined these to be “non-high priority sites” not requiring protection and management for red tree voles. Concurrence with this determination was received from the Tiller Ranger District of the Umpqua National Forest and the Roseburg Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Rationale for the Decision:

The Roseburg District *Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP 1995) discusses the need to manage Connectivity/Diversity Blocks for a moderately high level of timber production and a structure that contains a diversity of tree species of varying ages and sizes, and assorted canopy configurations (p. 152). Alternative 1 of the South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management EA would meet these management objectives, whereas Alternative 2 would not.

Comments on the South Umpqua Connectivity Density Management EA were received from one organization. None of the comments identified issues or concerns which were not already considered and addressed in the EA, or which constituted new information that would alter the conclusions of the analysis.

The BLM made a determination that the density management is “not likely to adversely affect” the northern spotted owl because, while the action would modify existing habitat conditions within the project stands, there would be no removal of any suitable nesting, roosting and foraging habitat. The BLM conferred with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this project and a letter of concurrence was received on May 31, 2001. The letter (File Name: 1-15-01-1-270) was in response to a BLM request for written concurrence on effects determination for FY 2001-2002 Programmatic Assessments for Activities Not Likely to Adversely Affect Listed Species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred that the action was not likely to adversely affect the northern spotted owl because, while thinning would degrade dispersal habitat in the short term, the habitat is expected to function as intended and improve over time.

The BLM determined that the action was “not likely to adversely affect” the Oregon Coast coho salmon, Oregon Coast steelhead trout, and would have no adverse affect on Essential Fish Habitat pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The basis for this determination was that density management within Riparian Reserves would be limited to intermittent streams which are a mile or more in distance from Essential Fish Habitat and streams inhabited by coho salmon. As a consequence, the likelihood of sediment transport resulting in habitat degradation was considered negligible. In a letter dated February 12, 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service concurred with these findings.

Monitoring:

Monitoring will be done in accordance with the ROD/RMP, Appendix I (pp. 84, 190, 193, and 195-199). Effectiveness and validation monitoring will be conducted with specific regards to: Riparian Reserves, Matrix, Water and Soils, Wildlife Habitat, and Special Status and Special Attention Species Habitat.

Protest Procedures:

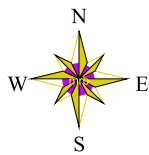
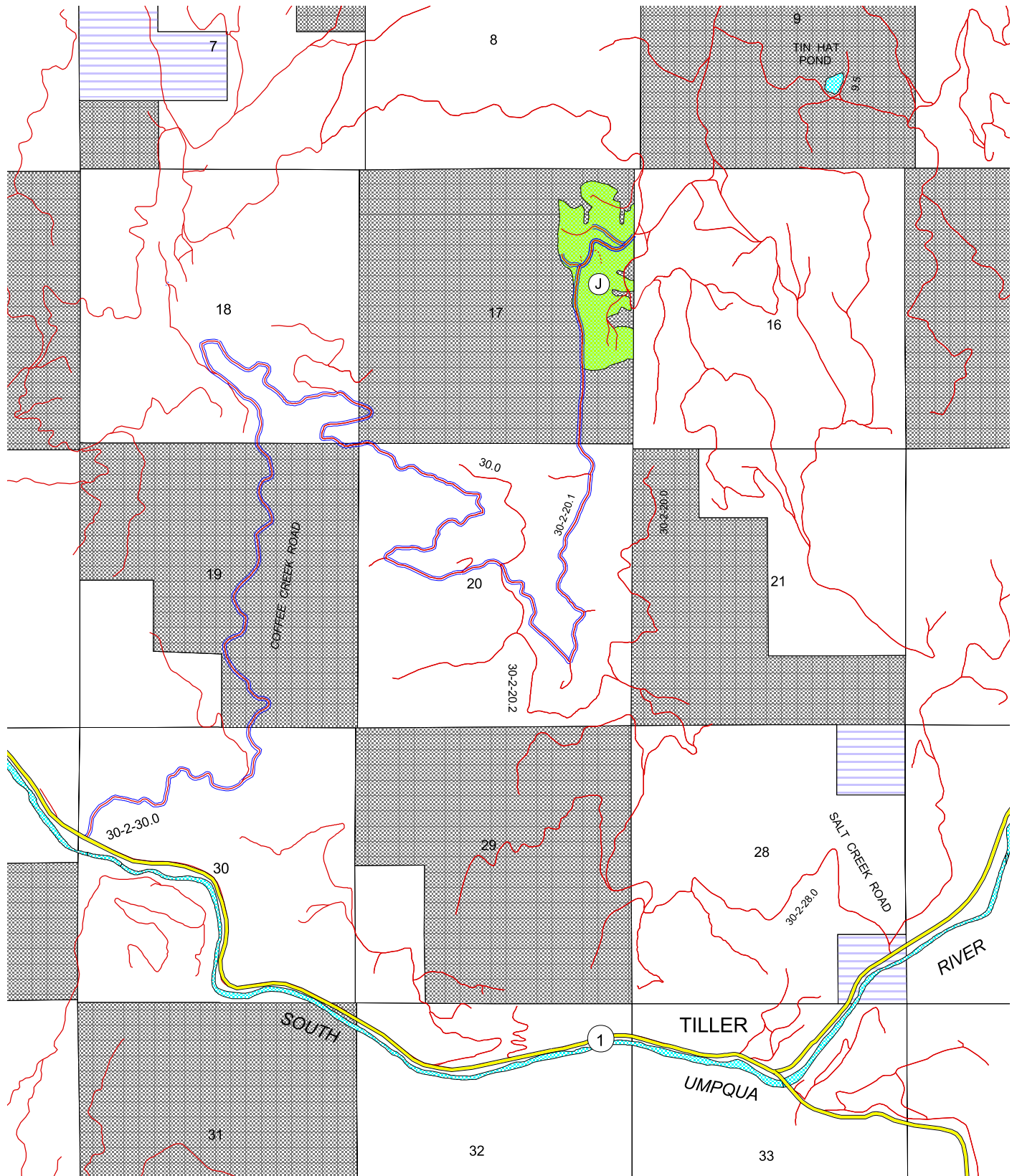
As outlined in 43 CFR § 5003 - Administrative Remedies under § 5003.3 (a) and (b), protests may be made within 15 days of the August 26, 2003, publication date of the first notice of sale in *The News-Review*, Roseburg, Oregon. Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision.

E. Dwight Fielder
Field Manager
South River Field Office

Date

BIG FOOT

Commercial Thinning



T30S R2W

Willamette Meridian, Douglas Co., OR.

0 0.5 1 Miles

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources. This information may be updated without notification.

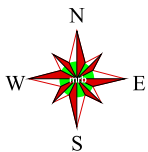
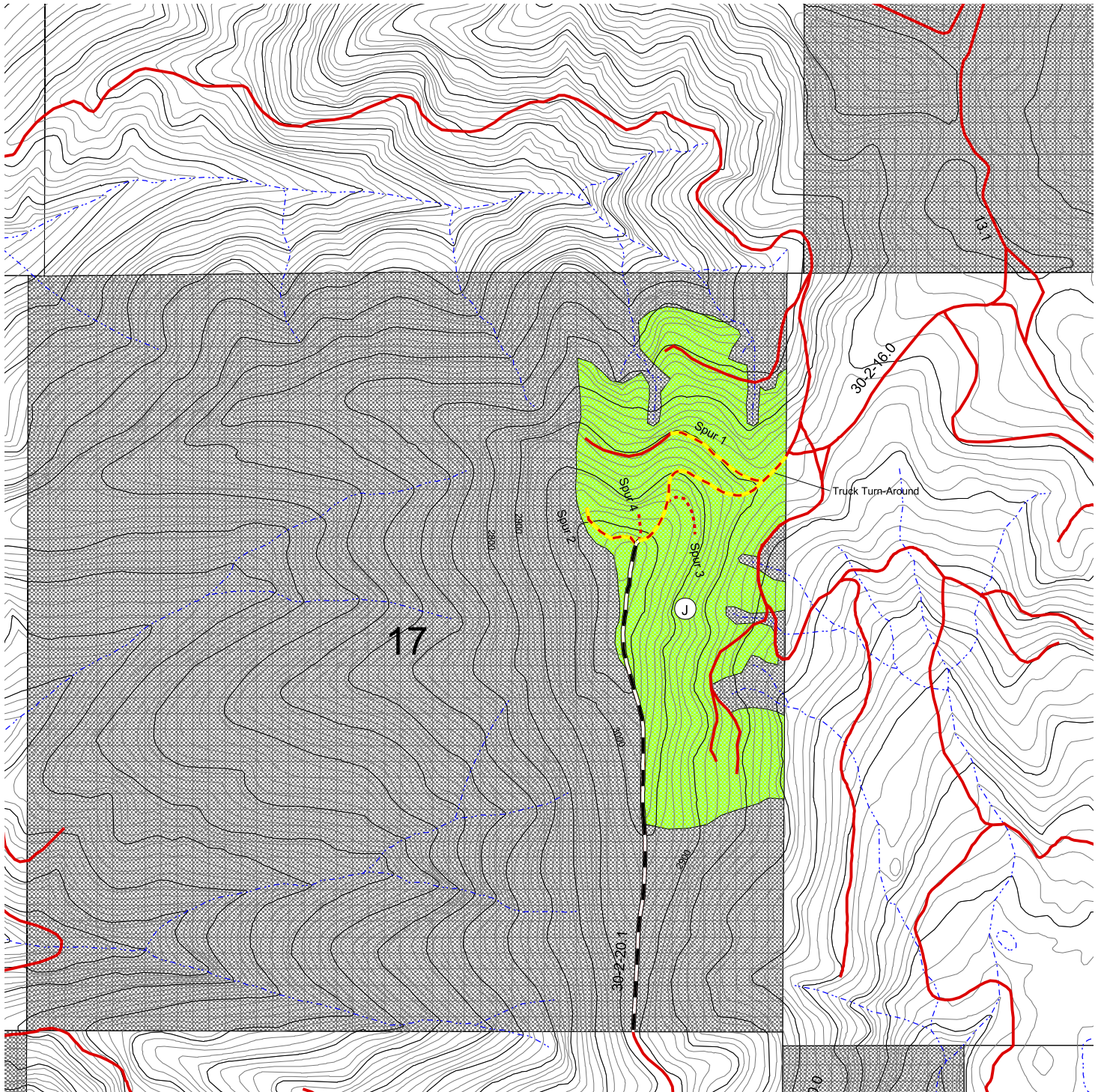


- Haul Route
- County Highway
- Existing Road
- Temporary Road

- Thinning Area
- O&C Land
- PD Land
- Private Land

BIG FOOT

Commercial Thinning



T30S R2W

Willamette Meridian, Douglas Co., OR.

1000 0 1000 Feet

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- Existing Road
- Renovate, Permanent/Rock
- Renovate, Decommission
- Construct, Decommission
- 100' Contour
- 20' Contour
- Stream

- Thinning Area
- O&C Land
- Private Land